

Exegesis of I Timothy 3 – With Practical Application for the Ministry

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In the preceding chapter, the Apostle Paul had given specific instructions to Timothy with respect to public worship. In the third chapter, Paul proceeds to give Timothy specific directives as to the administration of the church. He is not telling Timothy to arrange for certain offices and to define their functions and area of responsibility; for such offices were already established and in use. Paul's instructions to Timothy in this third chapter have to do with the kind of people who fill the offices of the church. Timothy was to see to it that only properly qualified persons fill them.

One might, therefore, entitle this chapter: The Qualifications for Those Who Hold an Office in the Church. Verses 1-7, The qualifications for those who hold the office of a pastor. Verses 8-13, The qualifications for those who hold the office of a deacon. Verses 14-16, The reason for conveying these instructions to Timothy in written form.

ὀρέγεται - to stretch oneself, aspire to, strive for, desire (w/gen. of the thing)

ἐπισκοπῆς - position or office as an overseer or bishop

VERSE ONE

Trustworthy is the statement, if someone aspires to the office of an overseer, he desires a praiseworthy occupation.

Paul begins by telling Timothy that what he is about to say concerning the office of the ministry is true; absolutely reliable and trustworthy for all times. Paul speaks of the office of the overseership or ministry in a very casual way, thereby showing that he is not introducing an office that was new or strange to Timothy and to the church. An 'episkopa' is the office of an 'episkopos', one who oversees. In the N.T. 'episkopos' - overseer and 'presbyteros' - elder, are titles for the same office and officeholder. On the basis of I Timothy 5:17, where the elders are divided into two groups; those who rule and those who labor in word and doctrine, Kretzmann concludes that the latter were the 'diakonoι', deacons, while the former were 'episkopoi', overseers, both being called 'presbyteroi'. Lenski makes this distinction. A man is called 'episkopos', overseer, in consideration of the work to be done, and a 'presbyteros', elder, in consideration of the dignity and honor.

We note that Paul uses two different verbs to express the idea of desiring. 'Oregomai' and 'epithumeo'. 'Oregomai' is stronger than 'epithumeo'. It means to aspire to, reach out one's hand for. Paul commends those who aspire to the office of the ministry and thereby encourages it. He says that they desire a 'kalou ergou', an excellent, a praiseworthy work.

The office of the ministry is indeed a work, a labor, an occupation which is good, excellent, and praiseworthy, not on account of the individuals engaged in it but on account of its goal and purpose, the salvation of souls through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Since the office of the ministry has as its sole objective the salvation of the soul, it goes without

saying that the office of the ministry carries with it great responsibilities. Responsibilities which will indeed make it an 'ergon', a work, a labor, and a service. Paul therefore highly commends such men as aspire to the office of the ministry and who are willing to take upon themselves this labor which God's grace imposes upon them.

ἀνεπίλημπτος - irreproachable, blameless, faultless
νηφάλιος - temperate (in the use of wine), sober
σώφρων - thoughtful, self-controlled
κόσμιος - respectable, honorable
φιλόξενος - hospitable, lit. a lover of strangers

VERSE TWO

It is necessary, then, that the overseer be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, qualified to teach.

The use of the word 'dei' indicates the absolute necessity of abiding by the qualifications for an overseer. Seven requirements are mentioned. The first requirement is rather general. An overseer is to be 'irreproachable', that is, he is to be 'a - epilambano', not to be laid hold of. He is to be of such a character that no one can rightfully take hold of him charging him with unfitness for his office. From the general Paul moves to the more specific. Four personal qualities are noted: 'the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable'. He is to be the husband of one wife. One who can not be accused of infidelity or sexual promiscuity. Paul had good reason for beginning with this qualification. At that time mature men were chosen for the overseership. Men, who as a rule, were married and had families. There were no seminary graduates to call. Many of those chosen for the overseership were converts from paganism. Sexual excesses were very commonplace among the heathen. Converts to the Gospel did not at once become irreproachable in their sexual behavior. Therefore, Paul says that a man who is not faithful to his one wife is to be barred from the office of overseer. Paul is not hereby barring widowers who have remarried from the ranks of the ministry. Otherwise Paul could not give the advice that he does concerning marriage in 1 Cor. 7:9 and Romans 7:2,3.

The next qualification for an overseer is that he be 'nephalis', that is temperate, not only in regard to intoxicants but also in regard to the mind. The verb 'nepho' means to be self-controlled. One that is not carried away by the false teachings referred to in I Timothy 1:4. To this Paul adds a closely related qualification - 'sophrona', self-controlled. That is, one of sound judgment, not flighty or unstable. The necessity and importance of such qualifications is certainly evident in view of what Paul says in 1:3 and 4:1.

A fourth requirement is that he be respectable. Like the two preceding qualification this one has to do with the persons mind and character, which in turn will be reflected in his life.

While temperance, self-control and respectability all have to do with the character of the individual, 'being hospitable and qualified to teach' have to do with what that individual imparts to others. 'Philoxenos' literally means 'one who loves strangers'. The very word tells us something about the conditions which existed in that day. The early Christians did a great deal of traveling. Forced to flee on account of persecution and oftentimes finding themselves without any means of support, the hospitality of other Christians was a great blessing to them. Then, too, there were cases of poverty, sickness, or the need of some widow or orphan which afforded

opportunity to exercise the Christian virtue of hospitality. The man who was ready to show such hospitality had one of the qualifications for becoming an overseer.

The word 'didaktikos' does not mean one who is 'willing to teach' but rather, one who is 'skilled in teaching', or 'one who is competent to teach'. Before one is qualified to teach others he must have been taught himself. He must first acquire the knowledge himself before he can impart that knowledge to his students. One who is 'didaktikos' 'qualified to teach', is one who has been properly instructed himself.

What are the necessary qualifications for a minister of the Word? Paul says that it is of absolute necessity that he be a man of irreproachable character. This does not mean that he is to be altogether sinless, for who then would be fit for the ministry. What it means is that he has abstained from all conduct which would give him a scandalous reputation. In keeping with this he must be the husband of one wife; faithful to his wife; leading a chaste and decent life; and not guilty of infidelity or polygamy. Furthermore, he must be temperate, not only in the use of intoxicants, but temperate, and self-controlled in his whole behavior. He will be careful, cautious, and discreet, a man of sound judgment, not flighty or unstable. But one who displays his spiritual maturity in his conduct, in his speech, and in every relationship with his fellowman.

The above qualifications will have their application in the life of the pastor. He must be of a hospitable nature. He will act in love toward the tramp and the stranger. He will especially show love, consideration, and hospitality toward those who are of the household of faith. He will not entertain his guests at the door or out in the yard, but he will invite them into his own home and make them feel truly welcome.

The pastor must also be capable of instructing others, for this is the object of the office which he holds, to impart the saving Gospel message to sinners. In order for a pastor to be 'apt to teach', he must not only receive instruction himself, training for the ministry, but through careful study and preparation for his various instruction classes in his congregation, he will equip himself to impart the knowledge which he has gained through faithful study, to those who sit before him. The ability to communicate the Word of God, the doctrines of the Christian faith, to the members of his flock is an essential and necessary function of his office.

πάροινος	- alcoholic, addicted to wine, (para - oinos 'next to wine')
πλήκτης	- bully, quarrelsome
ἐπιεικής	- gentle, kind, giving in
ἄμαχος	- peaceable, not of a fighting spirit
ἀφιλάργυρος	- not loving money, not greedy (lit. 'not a lover of silver')

VERSE THREE

Not addicted to wine, not quarrelsome, but gentle, peaceable (not of a fighting spirit), not loving money.

'Paroinos' made up of 'para' 'oinos' literally means 'one who sits beside wine, thus, one who is addicted to wine. 'Plektes' is one who is quick-tempered. One who is ready to fight at the drop of the hat. On the contrary an overseer is to be gentle, 'amachos' - 'against fighting'. One who is not the fighting kind. Lastly, one who is not a 'lover of silver', not greedy or stingy. Notice, in these verses, Paul begins with two negatives. Then he comes with one positive term

which he places in direct contrast to 'plektes' with the 'alla', and then follows with two negative terms again.

Paul says that a pastor dare not be addicted to wine. He must not be addicted to the habitual, intemperate consumption of strong drink of any kind. This is all the more when one remembers that a pastor is not to be quarrelsome. He is not to walk about with a chip on his shoulder, ready to engage in a heated argument at the slightest provocation. Instead a pastor must be peace-loving. He will try to avoid dissension and quarrels as long as possible without sacrificing the truth. He will be willing to give in and to patiently bear the burdens which the members of his own flock may heap upon him. And, he will be ready at all times with a conciliatory spirit, seeking not his own glory but the glory of Him who has called him to this office.

The pastor must also be warned against covetousness and greed. While the monetary rewards of the ministry may not be great, yet the pastor must be content. He must not become a lover of money and material possessions. He must beware of the sin which the Bible calls the "root of all evil". In our materialisticly-minded society, he will remember that he must be an example to his flock.

προιστάμενον - προϊστημι (pres. act. part.) to be at the head of, rule, manage, direct (with gen. of person or thing)

VERSES FOUR AND FIVE

Managing his own house well, keeping his children under control with all seriousness, but if one does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church.

The participle with which Paul begins the fourth verse literally means 'to stand before'. That means that as the manager of his household he is to be first or at the head of his house. Every Christian man should be able to keep his own house in order. He who fails in so simple a requirement is not qualified for the ministry. An essential part of managing his own household is the proper training and disciplining of his children. He will not permit his children to control him. He will not permit his children to place him in subjection, but he will command his children's respect and obedience. The way in which he conducts himself toward his children in securing their respect and obedience is to be with all seriousness. Realizing the responsibility which God has given to him as a parent, to bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, he will regard the proper training of his children as a 'serious' matter.

In verse five Paul states why managing ones own household is such an important qualification for the ministry. He does this by means of a comparison. If a man can not manage his own house, his own family, if he can not take care of a small group of people, the members of his family, how then can he attend to the far weightier task of 'caring for' the church of God, his congregation?

A minister should have the ability to lead and to rule. He must show by word and deed in his own home that he is conscious of the obligation which he has as the head of his household. He will not tolerate disrespect from his children. But by word and conduct he will command their respect. He will point out to his children from God's holy law what God expects of children. That they are to honor and respect, serve and obey their parents. But, above all, he will teach his children the gospel. He will point them to the grace of God in Christ so that the honor, respect,

and service which they render to their parents will not be slavish, but, it will be a willing, joyful response to God's grace in Christ Jesus.

Since the pastor lives in a 'glass house', the conduct and training of his children will also be noticed by his congregation. If a pastor cannot manage his own household, then what he builds up with one hand in his congregation, he will tear down with the other. For if he can not lead and rule a small congregation, his own family, then surely he can not do justice to the responsibility of caring for the spiritual needs of every member of his larger flocks the church of God.

νεόφυτος	- newly converted
τυφωθείς	- τυφώω, aor. pass. part. to be puffed up, conceited
ἵνα	- with subjunctive to express purpose
ὄνειδισμός	- disgrace, dishonor
παγίδα	- snare, trap

VERSES SIX AND SEVEN

Not a newly converted person, lest having become conceited, he fall into the devil's judgment. Also, it is necessary that he have a good testimony from those on the outside lest he fall into dishonor and the devil's trap.

The Apostle now concludes his list of qualifications for the office of the ministry. 'Neophutos' literally means someone who is 'newly planted', hence, a recent convert. Paul says that one who has not reached maturity in the faith should not be placed into the office of the ministry. On account of his spiritual immaturity, he will not be able to cope with the dangers and temptations of the office successfully. The greatest danger is that he would become conceited. That his elevation to this high office might cause him to become 'tuphotheis'- puffed up, and inflated with pride. Should this happen to him, the result would be most disastrous. The same condemnation which God pronounced upon Satan because of his pride, cast out of heaven and doomed to everlasting punishment, would also be pronounced upon such a novice, who through his own pride and conceit would choke off his young faith and would thus bring upon himself the very judgment which God pronounced upon Satan.

Verses 2-6 actually comprise one sentence. 'Neophutos' still goes back to 'einai', v. 2. The 'de kai' now introduce the conclusion to Paul's remarks concerning the qualifications for a pastor. As such verse 7 reverts back to the first qualification for an overseer in a congregation, verse 2. He must be 'above reproach'. Not only must he be that in the eyes of those who are within the Christian Church, but also in the eyes of those who are outside, the non-Christians. Paul, of course, is not saying that a Christian pastor should try to be a men-pleaser, at the expense of the truth. What he does say is that a candidate for the ministry should have such a good reputation in the community that his character and morals will be above reproach. If there are circumstances which cause the people in the community to question his morale and character, the reproach which he bares may well be carried over into the office which he holds, with the result that he himself may fall into the snare of the devil. While at the same time, the devil might use the offense which he has given as a stumbling block to others.

The dignity and beauty and responsibility of the holy ministry is so great that the greatest care must be exercised in observing the qualifications here enumerated. It is, therefore, 'dei' -

necessary, says the Apostle that the candidates for the office of the ministry measure up to the standards here set.

διάκονος	- servant, helper, deacon
δίλογος	- double-tongued, insincere
αισχροκερδεῖς	- fond of dishonest gain
συνειδήσει	- conscience

VERSES EIGHT AND NINE

Deacons, in like manner, worthy of respect, not double-tongued, not devoting themselves to much wine, not fond of dishonest gain. Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

With verse 8 Paul takes up the qualifications for a deacon. That there were two offices in the church referred to by 'overseers' and 'deacons' is evident from our passage and from Philippians 1:1. What services the deacons actually performed is not spelled out in detail. We do know that the deacons did not teach. They were not the overseers. They did not act as pastors and as the spiritual leaders of the congregation. They did, however, assist the overseers by performing other services such as collecting and distributing alms, looking after the sick, and so forth. According to Romans 16:1, there were also women deacons. Paul commended Phoebe for the faithful service which she had rendered to him and to others. In Acts 6, the 7 men who were appointed are not all deacons. Yet, the work for which they were chosen, namely, to care for the needs of the widows, was evidently that of deacons. Paul's congregations may have been prompted later by this example to appoint men for similar purposes and then called them deacons.

What kind of men were the deacons to be? Paul says: 'osautos' - likewise or in like manner, meaning that just as there are requirements for overseers so also there are requirements for deacons. The 'dei einai' of verse 2 is still to be taken with what Paul says here thereby indicating the necessity of these requirements for the office of the deacon. Like the overseer, the deacon is also to be 'semnous' corresponding to 'semnotetos' in verse 4, 'of serious mind and character'. Not double-tongued, that is, not saying one thing to one person and making a conflicting statement to another. Not devoting himself to much wine. Paul is not forbidding the use of wine but the excessive use of it. Not fond of dishonest gain. The idea here is that of one who is covetous and greedy, a gambler; one who might use his office, as did Judas, as a means for dishonest gain.

Having mentioned these dangers it is not surprising to hear Paul add: "holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience". 'Mysterion' does not mean something that is to remain hidden but something which is known only through revelation. Paul is saying that the mystery of faith, the glorious truth of salvation, the message of forgiveness of sins, life and salvation through faith in the merits of Christ, has been revealed to them through the Gospel. God's plan of salvation remains hidden to man, a mystery, until God reveals it to man through the Gospel. This is the mystery which the deacons must cling to in faith. Faith is the hand which accepts, which holds this mystery. This precious treasure Paul tells the deacons they must hold in a pure conscience. The condition of their consciences their whole conduct must be in conformity with the glorious truth of salvation, the mystery of faith which they possess.

The duties of the deacons resemble those of the pastor, and for good reason. The duties of the office of deacon also bring him into contact with the members of the congregation. It is necessary then that he be of such mind and character that he will be respected. He will not be double-tongued. This demand of the apostle can be understood all the more easily since the visit of a deacon to the various homes in the congregation exposes them to the temptation to speak of the same matter in varying ways. Perhaps at times, toning down the truth to suit his own purposes of being good friends with everyone. Since the deacon holds an office of trust in the congregation by his conduct he will also set an example for the congregation. Therefore, he must not be addicted to alcohol, nor must he be a covetous man, a lover of things which are gained by dishonesty. Since the deacons in Paul's day were entrusted with the distribution of gifts of money and food to the poor, there was always the temptation to embezzle funds and to falsify the records to cover up their foul deed. The same temptations are there for those officers of a congregation who have been entrusted with the finances of the congregation. The conscience of a deacon must be clean. It must be free from guilt. For only then will he be able to go about the duties of his office with God's blessing, holding in his pure conscience the mystery of faith, the glorious truth of salvation. The condition of his conscience dare, not contradict the truth of the Gospel which he possesses. His whole conduct must serve to edify the Christians who have placed him in that office.

δοκιμαζέσθωσαν - to prove, to put to the test, examine. 3rd plural pres. pass. imp. denoting a command, par. 294, C&S

διακονείτωσαν - To serve (as a deacon) pres. imp. pass.

ἀνέγκλητας - blameless

VERSE TEN

And also let these first be put to the test, then let them serve, being blameless.

Lest someone should say that such a testing is unnecessary for the office of the deacon, Paul states that it is necessary. Note that Paul uses the present imperative 'dokimazesthosan' which indicates a testing that covers a period of time. The plural form of the imperatives indicates that this testing was not to be the sole responsibility of Timothy but this was to be done by the congregation. Paul says that the deacons are to be 'blameless', that is, men of sound Christian character, who by word and deed have set a good example for the other members of the flock. Note, Paul does not advocate placing a man on the church council who has heretofore been careless in his Christian living, in the hope that being placed in such a position will make him more faithful. That is not what church offices are for. Paul says: "let them first be put to the test, then let them serve, being blameless.

This is why we follow the policy in our congregations of having a nominating committee, who together with the pastor, draws up a list of nominations for respective offices in the church. This is done to determine whether a man has the particular qualifications which Paul makes mention of here, which make him eligible for such an office.

σέμνος - worthy of respect

διαβόλους - slanderous

νηφαλίου - sober, temperate

VERSE ELEVEN

Women, in like manner, worthy of respect, not slanderous, temperate, faithful in all things.

Back in verse 8 Paul had stated: "Deacons, in like manner, worthy of respect"; and now: "Women, in like manner, worthy of respect". Note that the A.V. translates this verse as though Paul was setting down qualifications for the wife of a deacon. In the preceding verses Paul had been listing the qualifications for the various offices in the church. The fact that Paul uses exactly the same wording, "in like manner", to introduce the qualifications for women as he used for the deacon, and the fact that 'ginaikas' is governed by the 'dei einai' would indicate that Paul is speaking about another office here, the office which a woman might hold, the office of the deaconess. It is because single women and not deacon's wives were considered for the office of the deaconess that their personal qualifications follow verse 10. All three sets of officers, the overseer, the deacon, and the deaconess, must meet certain requirements. The deaconess, just as the deacon, is to be worthy of respect. Not slanderous, not a busybody, but faithful and trustworthy in carrying out her responsibilities.

From earliest times women were employed in this capacity of deaconess in the church. In Romans 16:1 Paul commended Phebe, a 'diakonon', for the services which she rendered both to him and to others. Since the greatest enemy of most women is their tongue, Paul list this as one of the important qualifications for a deaconess. They are not to be gossips whereby they would reveal matters which should have remained secret. Furthermore they are to be temperate, that is, using moderation not only in sensual enjoyments, but exhibiting self-control and common sense. All other qualifications for the Christian deaconess Paul includes in the demand that she be "faithful in all things". Though the services which the deaconesses rendered to the church may have seemed like trifles, yet in the many little services which she rendered they were a blessing to the church. Else Paul would not have commended Phoebe as he did. When consecrated women, motivated by the love of Christ, devote their lives to the service of their fellow men, their value to the church will be great.

ἔστωσαν - pres. act. imp. (eimi)

βαθμόν - rank, grade, standing (with peripoieo – win a good standing)

παρρησίαν - courage, confidence, boldness

VERSES TWELVE AND THIRTEEN

Let deacons be husbands of one wife, commendably managing children and their own homes.

For those who have served commendably are winning for themselves an excellent standing, and a great boldness in faith which (is) in Christ Jesus.

What Paul said about the office of the overseer, vv. 4 & 5, he now says about the office of the deacon. He is not introducing a fourth office but as in verse 10, so also here Paul uses the imperative to introduce additional requirements for the office of the deacon. The 'dei einai' of verse 2 governs the construction of 'episkopov' verse 2; of 'diakonous' verse 8; and, of 'ginaikae' verse 11. 'Overseers, deacons, and deaconesses must be'. This construction indicates that Paul is speaking about three distinct, and separate offices.

Having concluded his requirements for the various offices. And, having stated the necessity for all of them, (cf. 'dei' in vv. 2 & 7 and supplied in vv. 8 & 11 and by the imperatives in vv. 10 & 12), Paul begins his next statement with 'gar'. The 'gar' introduces a result which should serve as an incentive to those who serve in these offices. Those who fill these offices and serve well win for themselves an excellent standing as a result and as a reward. The 'oi diakonesantes' refers to those who serve. It is not limited to the office of the deacon. For Paul calls himself a 'diakonos' and also applies the term to his assistants, (cf. Eph. 3:7; 1 Tim. 4:6). The verb 'diakoneo' is still used in a general sense and means 'to do service for others'. Furthermore, how could Paul say that only the deacons were to receive a reward for their faithful service to the exclusion of the overseers and the deaconesses. The result of faithful service was also to serve as an incentive for them. Note Paul's use of the aorist and present tense. Those who have already done and are continuing to do excellent work are acquiring an excellent standing. An excellent standing serves as both a reward and an incentive.

Another regard of serving well is that one acquires great boldness in faith which (is) in Christ Jesus. All of these offices are to be held and exercised by believers. Having served excellently for some time in one office makes one act with boldness and assurance. Having acquired such boldness in faith, the faith which is in Christ Jesus, is likewise a most satisfying reward and incentive. An incentive to continue on this course of faithful service in the future. The faithfulness with which one performs his work is directly related to his faith. As he grows and matures in faith through the Gospel, he also grows in the faithful performance of his work. All of this strongly influences the boldness of his teaching and preaching, as we see in the case of Stephen.

βραδύνω - to delay, hesitate

εἰδῆς - 2 perf. subj. (oida) used in the sense of the present tense

ἀναστρέφεσθαι - pres. mid. inf. to act, behave, conduct oneself

VERSES FOURTEEN AND FIFTEEN

These things I write to you hoping to come to you soon. But if I delay, that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in God's house which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

Having concluded his instructions to Timothy and to the church concerning the various offices, Paul concludes with a personal word to Timothy. Paul is conveying these instructions to Timothy in writing because, while he hopes to come to him very shortly, he also feels that he may be delayed. This also shows the importance of these instructions. Paul did not want to wait with them until he arrived in person. The instructions which Paul gave in writing to Timothy in chapters 2 and 3 would let Timothy know how to conduct himself and also to arrange the worship services and offices in the church, "the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth". Paul impresses upon Timothy the great responsibility which is entrusted to him. Timothy had been entrusted with managing God's house, the living God's church. Since it is God's house and not Timothy's own house or the house of the members of his congregation, things must be done as God wants them and not as man desires them.

What makes this responsibility even greater is that the living God's church is the pillar and foundation of the truth. Note the absence of the definite article with words which are so distinctive that they can be regarded as definite (cf. Robertson, par. 388). There is only one

church, one pillar, one foundation of truth. A pillar and a foundation are things which bear or support something. What truth does God's church, the pillar and foundation bear? This truth is the Gospel. While the Gospel does not need a pillar or foundation to support it, yet the people whom the Gospel has saved, the living God's church, the holy Christian Church, bear God's saving truth, the Gospel, for all the world. Like a pillar and a foundation, God's church is a carrier, a bearer of the Gospel, hence 'the pillar and foundation of the truth.'

- ὀμολογουμένως - (adv.) undeniably, most certainly
μυστήριον - Mystery, something too profound for the human mind to understand.
Something which God must reveal to man.
ἐφανερώθη - aor. pass. ind.
ὤφθη - (orao) to see
ἄγγελοις - dat. of agent

VERSE SIXTEEN

And most certainly, great is the mystery of godliness, who was revealed in flesh, was declared righteous in spirit, was seen by angels, was proclaimed among nations, was believed in the world, was taken up in glory.

What in verse 9 Paul called the 'mystery of faith' he here calls the 'mystery of godliness'. By mystery Paul means the content of the Gospel. It is a mystery, since the world does not know it. And it remains a mystery until God reveals it to man. Paul goes on to enlarge upon the mystery of the Gospel-truth in a hymn. The six brief statements which follow are all introduced by aorist passives, which indicate an action which took place and was completed in the past. All have the verb form placed in the front indicating special emphasis. All are statements of truths 'aletheias', v. 15. All are statements of undeniable fact, 'omologoumenos', that cannot possibly be changed. And, all deal with the salvation accomplished by Christ Jesus. Like the 2nd Article of the Apostles' Creed, what Paul says here concerning Christ takes us from heaven to earth and from earth back to heaven. The order is chronological. Christ was revealed in flesh. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us", John 1"14. Jesus took upon Himself human flesh and form. Jesus was declared righteous.. in spirit. Jesus, the Righteous One, has declared righteous by God. When and how did this take place? Jesus who bore the sins of all, God declared to be righteous by raising Him from the dead. God made Jesus to be sin for us. He bore the curse and condemnation of God. Having become obedient unto death even the death of the cross to make atonement Earth's world's sin, God now raised; from the dead thereby declaring His sacrifice acceptable, His work complete, and Himself to be righteous.

He was seen by angels. The angels were the first ones to see the resurrected Lord. He was preached in nations. He was believed in the world. After His resurrection Jesus commanded His disciples: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature". Having completed His work of redemption; and having commissioned His disciples to be busy doing His work, preaching the Gospel, Jesus was received in glory. The glorified Savior was taken up in glory. He ascended into heaven. where He has now entered into the full use of His divine power and majesty. He is over all, God blessed forever! Amen.